632 town (not the pipe line to the edge of town but
621 the system of hollowed logs which conducts
312 water to the center of town) for which it is responsible. Upon notification that repairs are needed or that logs must be replaced, the *barrio* chief notifies men in his *barrio* of the work needed and the time. This notification may come from the *síndico* (or his *veedor*), or any person noticing something wrong may report it to the *municipio*. The *barrio* not only provides labor but must raise funds if equipment or materials are needed. *Barrio* I is responsible for the section from the cement water tanks to the street called Arista. *Barrio* II is responsible for the section from Arista to Pensador, *barrio* III for the section from Pensador to Olvide, and *barrio* IV for the section from Olvide to the pipe line.

The work is done under the direction of the *síndico*. Usually 24 *comisionados* are named for each log trough needed. Eight men are responsible for cutting the log and hollowing it out; 8 more bring the log down from the mountains, and 8 others put it in place.

632 In addition, each *barrio* has responsibility for
621 certain other public works. For example,
[491] *barrio* III is responsible for maintaining two bridges on the road to Zacapu.

[767] Still another *barrio* duty is cleaning the graveyard of weeds and brush in preparation for the Day of the Dead. The cemetery is divided into four squares corresponding to the four *barrios*, and the young men from each *barrio* are assigned to a section. In 1940, in *barrio* III, having the most numerous population, each youth had a strip 4 paces wide by 65 paces long to clear, while youths of other *barrios* had strips from 6 to 8 paces wide. *Barrio* IV, although having a population as large as *barrio* II and larger than *barrio* I, took a half day longer to do its part and the young men were teased about it.

632 The maintenance of the pipe line is a sore
621 point, evidently. The original pipe line was
312 installed by the State or Federal Government.
653 Some maintenance is done by the *municipio*, but the line was in bad condition in 1940 and needed replacing. Even more interest, however, was shown in replacing the present wooden aqueduct with a pipe line and perhaps extending it to some other parts of town. It was

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p.1094]

632 estimated that the project of merely replacing
621 the wooden aqueduct would cost between $2,500
312 and $3,000, and efforts were being made to get
653 the Federal Government to provide the money. Actually the job could have been done by an assessment little larger than that called for by the two main fiestas of the town, but such an idea had not occurred to anyone. This feeling that major improvements should be made by outside agencies is a common one in Mexico.

377 This attitude was somewhat reinforced by
632 the action of the Federal Government in ex-
653 tending a power line to the town and supplying
621 it with street lighting. In this case, it is true, the town was required to provide the posts for the power system. *Comisionados* were named who cut the posts and charred the ends under the direction of the *síndico*. However, this involved expenditure of labor rather than of money.

491 A number of road repair jobs are undertaken
632 from time to time. In 1940, in preparation for
621 the harvest, the community repaired part of the road toward Nahuatzen. A new entry into town was made which avoided the necessity of crossing a bridge over the southern *barranca*. The existing bridge was in bad repair, and replacement was thus postponed.

ELECTIONS

632 Elections in Cherán ostensibly follow regular
666 legal forms. Extensive and nearly complete
662 lists of voters are prepared by the municipal officials. Some 2 or 3 weeks before the election the mayor calls a town meeting to nominate candidates. The mayor asserted that everyone was invited in 1940 but that very few attended. Most of those, he insisted, had been rounded up by the police. Others felt that only the most influential people in town were invited. In either case, apparently only about 50 persons attended. As at the 1940 election *barrios* II and IV were to elect members of the *ayuntamiento*, two tickets were nominated. These tickets were forwarded to the State offices of the PRM (*Partido Revolucionario Mexicano*) in Morelia, and the second of the two tickets was approved as the official PRM ticket. This must have been an act of prestidigitation on the part of the State officials, for there was nothing to choose between the two tickets and the State

[364] only on the days preceding a town fiesta. The
653 householder is also expected to work on certain
community enterprises, such as repairing roads or
bridges and the water system. Likewise, unless
625 he occupies some special position which exempts
him, or is well along in years, he will be expected
at times to join the *ronda*, or night watch, which
polices his *cuartel*, or *barrio*.

Cherán is unique in its attitude toward visitors.
351 We have already mentioned the general occurrence
of fences. These are usually high enough to pre-
vent passers-by on the street from peering into
the house yard. Visitors always knock at the
574 gate or call out, announcing themselves. As some-
609 times the inmates will not respond to a knock,
the call is useful in getting a response. Unless
the visitor is a relative, *compadre*, or neighbor

[Continued on p.326]

RELATION OF THE TARASCAN HOUSE TO THE ENVIRONMENT

CHERÁN

362 The wooden house, or "*troje*," of Cherán is
relatively dry but, in the absence of any method
of heating, it is uncomfortably cold most of the
year, especially at night. The kitchen floor is
[354] frequently damp; although it is heated by fire,
ventilation is inadequate, and the smoke often
irritating to eyes and throat. On windy days,
also, drafts whistle through cracks or under the
lower edges of the walls. The masonry-adobe
type of construction also presents drawbacks. It
is not heated either and, while wind is less apt to
penetrate, it is often unsatisfactorily ventilated.
Moreover, the dampness climbs up through the
walls at least 6 months of every year and into
every corner of the room.

Probably the "*troje*," or house loft, can most
251 easily be made impervious to rodents if it be well
362 built, and if bunches of cactus be fastened at
strategic points on the outside walls. Rarely,
however, is this true. In addition, the roof often
permits entry of birds, particularly half-wild
domesticated pigeons, and scarcely ever is any-
thing done to prevent their forays on the maize.
It is doubtful if the masonry-adobe structure is
superior in any respect for loft storage. For
main-floor storage it probably is inferior owing to
the greater dampness. [Continued bottom of

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